

Washington, DC -- Today, U.S. Rep. Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) announced \$513,348 for six local fire departments through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program for operations and safety enhancements.

"Local first responders work tirelessly, many of them as volunteers, to keep our homes safe and protect our families in the event of a fire or emergency situation," said Arcuri, a member of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus. "Assistance to Firefighters grants are an invaluable resource to local communities because they enable fire departments to upgrade equipment and attend trainings without adding to local taxes. I will continue working to ensure that local first responders have the resources they need to keep us safe."

Funding awards announced by Arcuri include:

\$82,589 for the Cuyler Fire District in Cortland County,
\$40,850 for the Sherburne Fire Department in Chenango County,
\$115,330 for the Afton Fire Department in Chenango County,
\$209,000 for the Border City Fire District in Seneca County,
\$45,629 for the Waterloo Volunteer Fire Company, Inc. in Seneca County, and
\$19,950 for Sempronius Fire Company in Cayuga County.

The Sherburne Fire Department will use these funds for the purchase of new communications equipment. The new radios will comply with the Chenango County communications upgrade, as well as provide better coverage and more flexibility in emergency situations.

The Border County Fire District will purchase two phone trailers for hazmat response in Seneca County. "We had some fires last year where we could have used these phone trailers," said First Assistance Chief, Walter Mumford. "This is a regional grant that will help the county and save a lot of taxpayer dollars on needed supplies."

The AFG program provides funds to fire departments, emergency response personnel and first responders to protect the health and safety of workers and local citizens. Since taking office, Arcuri has announced over \$4.8 million in AFG program grants for fire departments in 24th Congressional District. Since 2004, the program has granted nearly \$2.75 billion in assistance nationwide.

Arcuri also recently announced that at his request the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will host a Fire Grant Workshop in Cortland, NY on Wednesday, March 11, 2009 and in Rome, NY on Thursday, March 12, 2009 to help emergency first responders apply for grants through the AFG Program.

Local fire departments interested in applying for AFG program grants are encouraged to call Arcuri's office toll-free in NYS at 1-800-235-2525.

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